

Assassin In The Limelight, by Robert Ross

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[Part One]

(A bell tolls, a crowd cheers.)

MAN: Often have these bells peeled out the dread summons of disaster. Now, on this morning of Good Friday, how joyously beautiful is their tone as they tell us of rebellion ended! Of war terminated! Of peace restored! Now and henceforth, in truth, in reality, we are, we will be the United States! (Cheers with a few boos.)

HECKLER: What good will Union do the working man? The blood of our fathers and brothers and sons spilled in the service of Union and what for? To keep us in the poorhouse, and give the slave a vote!

CROWD: Come on, shut it.

HECKLER: No surrender! Never surrender! Get your hands off me.

MAN 2: Come on, sir, there are ladies present.

HECKLER: No surrender! Never surrender!

BOOTH: Well now, Officer Parker keeping order, I see.

PARKER: Mister Booth, fresher than a tulip, considering the state you was in last evening.

BOOTH: The state you were in, my friend, it's a miracle you're upright.

PARKER: I'll admit it is this lamp post doing the work.

CLARA: Officer? Officer Parker?

PARKER: Oh, hell.

CLARA: : What is the meaning of this? An officer of the Law standing by while rowdies run amok on the streets of the Capital?

PARKER: Miss Harris, I'd say fellows that shoot their mouths off on a day feelings are running so high deserve a little roughing.

CLARA: Officer Parker!

PARKER: All right, all right, I'll go and knock some sense into them. Good day to you both.

BOOTH: Good day, Mister Parker.

PARKER: The lot of you, fall back.

BOOTH: Would you have me escort you to a less troublesome spot, Miss Harris, was it? It'd be my pleasure.

CLARA: Every woman in Washington knows of your pleasure, Mister Booth. I shall be perfectly safe without your protection, thank you.

BOOTH: As you wish. Good day. I hope we'll meet again, ma'am.

CLARA: Sir.

MAN: Let no form of passion, no feeling of revenge, intrude upon any heart. Let all strive for not merely legal but for real hearty impassioned oneness of Union throughout our broad land. Union of hearts, Union of hands, Union in all that is American. Union and liberty, one and inseparable! (Cheers.)

FORD: Pops! Pops! Where are you, boy? I thought I told you to stick to the stage door like molasses. (sniff) Is that lavender. (bangs on door) Pops. Pops, you got a piece in that dressing room? I can smell her, Pops. Don't you deny it. Mister Wilde'll be here any minute, you dallying dolt, and a gentleman like Mister Wilde, he'll be straight on the first boat back to England if he thinks he's walked into some kind of a cat house. Now open up!

KNOX [OC]: Entrée.

FORD: But that ain't. Oh Lord. Mister Wilde!

(Not a chance. Oscar Wilde was 1854-1900, and this is 1865 by the opening speech.)

KNOX: Mister Ford, I presume.

FORD: Henry Clay Ford, at your service. (cough) Phew, that is some scent, Mister Wilde.

KNOX: Oscar, please. An infusion of lavender and bergamot. I find it soothes my nerves.

FORD: I guess it must be the latest thing in London, right? Just like you, Mister Wilde.

KNOX: Just like me, Mister Ford.

FORD: Well, welcome to my theatre.

KNOX: Your brother's theatre, I believe?

FORD: Sure, sure. How'd you get in here?

KNOX: I was a little early. Your boy, Pops, showed me in here and made me very comfortable. He even made me tea, or some Atlantic variation thereof.

FORD: Some Atlantic variation thereof. (laughs) That, that'll be the famous Oscar Wilde wit.

KNOX: Devastating, isn't it?

FORD: You know, I gotta tell you, that wit is gonna make you famous all across these new United States.

KNOX: That's the plan, yes.

FORD: This play of yours, the Importance of Being Ernest. Have to admit, when it arrived I thought something that big's only good for a door stop. But you know what, Mister Wilde? I started reading and by the end I was literally laughing my head off.

KNOX: How distressing for you. (yawns) I wonder whether you'd mind

FORD: Oh, of course, of course. You're tired. I'm so sorry, Mister Wilde. I guess I'll leave you to it. You've had one heck of a journey, I expect.

(Door closes.)

KNOX: You've no idea.

DOCTOR: Ah! P G H Fender.

EVELYN: P G H who?

DOCTOR: Hmm? Only the finest player ever to captain England. Oh, what a day that was. Summer of '23, or was it '24. Ow!

EVELYN: Are you all right down there?

DOCTOR: Got him with a concealed googly for 3. He was so impressed he simply put down his weapon and applauded. Ow!

EVELYN: Oh, Doctor, what on Earth are you talking about?

DOCTOR: Ow! Right, that does it. No, no, too purple. No.

EVELYN: Doctor!

DOCTOR: Cricket, Doctor Smythe. Cricket.

EVELYN: Oh, cricket. How did we get on to cricket?

DOCTOR: Ah ha! One moment. Percy George, you see. He was one of the true gentlemen of the game. There, that should do it.

EVELYN: Do what?

DOCTOR: This.

(Thump. The Tardis materialises.)

EVELYN: Oh, scientific as ever, Doctor.

DOCTOR: Naturally. It doesn't take any old thump, you know. Each strike precisely timed and weighted.

EVELYN: Ah, just like P G H.

DOCTOR: Experience and knowledge, Evelyn, that's what counts.

EVELYN: Not to mention concealing your googlies.

DOCTOR: Hmm. Well, well. Earth again.

EVELYN: You amaze me.

DOCTOR: And the year, 1865. Ring any bells?

EVELYN: Leopold II was crowned King of the Belgians, the Matterhorn was climbed for the first time, Rudyard Kipling was born on the 30th of December, the Duke of Abercorn

DOCTOR: Quiet sort of time, then. Let's take a look round, shall we?

(Tardis door opens.)

EVELYN: I thought you'd never ask.

(Banging on door.)

FORD: Pops? Is that you? Brother may be in Virginia, but don't think you can swing the lead with me.

BOOTH: Now, now, who have we here? Ah, I remember. Young Harry.

FORD: Henry. Mister Booth, sir. The big man, he's in Richmond.

BOOTH: Don't matter, junior. Where's Maisie?

FORD: Maisie?

BOOTH: Titian haired beauty, runs the box office.

FORD: Oh, she's off. Stomach cramps or something.

BOOTH: Oh well. She keeps my messages behind. Reckoned I'd check them in passing, if I may?

FORD: Oh, sure. Always a pleasure to see the most esteemed members of the local company.

BOOTH: Not so esteemed as Harry Hawk these days.

FORD: Ah, but he's a revelation (under next line) Because of the ... far and wide on the strength of

them notices, even General Grant is

BOOTH: What's this? (reading) My dear Mister Booth. Permit me to prevail upon the finest thespian in the district to read for an Englishman an extract from the greatest play. Grant? He's coming here?

FORD: With the President, tonight. Had the White House boy stop by first thing.

BOOTH: Well now.

FORD: Can you believe, the hero of Appomattox here at Fords?

BOOTH: And the President?

FORD: Mrs Lincoln too. Them over at Grovers is going to be sick.

BOOTH: This fellow Wilde wants me to read for him. He on the level?

FORD: Mister Wilde? Oh, a great man, straight as they come. Me and him, we're in collaboration.

BOOTH: Are you now?

FORD: Mind, he's resting now, in his dresser.

BOOTH: If he's as keen as all that, he'll meet me, junior.

FORD: You can find the way, Mister Booth?

BOOTH: There's not an inch of Fords that I don't know.

FORD: You give it all you got, Mister Booth.

(Door opens.)

FORD: What the devil are you

DOCTOR: Are we doing in your office? Good question.

FORD: And how in the blue blazes did this blue box get in here with you?

DOCTOR: Another good question. And good questions deserve good answers. Well, Evelyn?

EVELYN: I er. Oh dear. This doesn't get any easier, does it?

(Knock on door.)

BOOTH [OC]: Wilde? It's Booth.

KNOX: Ah, my protégé. Do come in.

(Door opens.)

KNOX: My dear fellow, take a seat, do.

BOOTH: Curious atmosphere here.

KNOX: Lavender and bergamot, yes.

BOOTH: No, something else.

(Door closes.)

KNOX: Mister Booth.

BOOTH: What's in here?

KNOX: My cabinet of curiosities.

BOOTH: Your what?

KNOX: Curios. The clue's in the name. Mister Booth, you seem edgy.

BOOTH: These are strange days we're living through.

KNOX: Ah yes, and a man of your sympathies needs to be careful, yes?

BOOTH: What do you know of my sympathies, sir? Speak, or let Mister Bowie's blade paint these walls in English rouge.

KNOX: I was, I was referring to those platonic sympathies common in the brotherhood of actors, but tragically misunderstood in the wider world.

BOOTH: Wilde, I thought you knew my reputation. Bad Johnny Booth only has eyes for the ladies. My knife ain't for no fruit.

KNOX: Speaking of fruit, would you care for a glass of elderberry cordial? A trifle tart on the tongue, but positively bursting with antioxidants.

BOOTH: Well, if you're imbibing yourself.

KNOX: Bums up. Hmm, sublime. Drink, drink.

BOOTH: In a moment. Business first.

KNOX: Of course. I'll come straight to the point, Mister Booth. I saw you last year in Boston.

BOOTH: Highlights from Shakespeare.

KNOX: Indeed. That night I knew I'd seen the finest actor on the American stage, a figure to rival any in the opposite continent. Keen, Beerbohm Tree, Olivier.

BOOTH: Olivier?

KNOX: Perhaps I'm being a trifle previous. No matter. You get my gist? These are princes, my boy, proud princes. Some actors are little better than strolling psychopaths, but it comes to a very few to be great. And you, Mister Booth, you will walk amongst them.

BOOTH: You think so.

KNOX: I know so. And that is why I've written a little piece with you in mind. Booth?
BOOTH: (sotto) I thought I heard something behind that curtain.
KNOX: Behind the curtain? Are you sure? I don't see anything.
BOOTH: Made you look, though, didn't I?
KNOX: Very convincing.
BOOTH: Mud in your eye, Wilde. Hmm, not bad. This piece, is it tragedy, comedy, what?
KNOX: Comedy of a kind. The hero of the piece is a smart young man who calls himself Jack, but thinks himself Ernest.

FORD: (gasp) Burglars! Burglars and vagabonds.
EVELYN: Well, really. Do we look the type?
FORD: Well, if it's last night's takings your after, I've banked them already.
DOCTOR: No, you haven't.
FORD: Hands off, Captain.
DOCTOR: Doctor, actually. And believe it or not, we've no interest in your takings.
FORD: Hold up. Is that an English accent?
DOCTOR: To your ears, maybe.
FORD: Of course! You're with him.
EVELYN: Him?
FORD: I don't know why I didn't see it before. I thought Mister Wilde was dandy enough, but this fellow here, he takes the biscuit, eh, lady?
DOCTOR: I beg your pardon?
FORD: Well, that coat may be all the thing in Piccadilly, son, but here in DC folks will take you for a theatrical.
DOCTOR: Now look here.
FORD: Of course, that's exactly what you are, isn't it. Seeing as you're with Oscar Wilde.
DOCTOR: Just because a person happens. Did he just say Oscar Wilde?
EVELYN: He did.
FORD: So, what's in the box, eh, Doc? More fancy costumes?
DOCTOR: Er, yes, among other things. Evelyn, this is 1865. Oscar Wilde's not out of short trousers.
EVELYN: Yes, yes, obviously, but
DOCTOR: Something's very wrong here. I can smell it.
FORD: Damn, but this thing's warm. How'd you get this through the door?
DOCTOR: Oh, secrets of the trade, Mister er
EVELYN: Ford, isn't it?
FORD: The very same.
DOCTOR: Evelyn? How in Kasterborous did you know that?
FORD: (laughs) Read the bill board outside, I should imagine.
EVELYN: This is Ford's Theatre, Doctor. Washington DC, 1865.
FORD: It's collapsible, right? Damned if I can find the switch.
DOCTOR: Don't do that. Ford's Theatre?
EVELYN: Correct.
DOCTOR: Washington DC?
EVELYN: Precisely.
DOCTOR: 1865?
EVELYN: On the nose.
DOCTOR: Then you must be John Thompson Ford?
FORD: No.
DOCTOR: Oh.
FORD: Henry Clay Ford, his brother.
EVELYN: The house treasurer, yes?
FORD: I've got my sights on higher things.
EVELYN: Doctor, this isn't good.
DOCTOR: Evelyn, I very much doubt we'd have been so unlucky as to have landed at precisely
EVELYN: Mister Ford, I wonder if you could furnish us with today's date.
FORD: Eh?
EVELYN: The date. We've only just arrived, and the time difference can be a little confusing.
FORD: Oh, sure, sure, sure. It's April 14th.
DOCTOR: This Oscar Wilde. I want to see him. Now.

(Door opens, wolf whistle.)

LIZZIE: Well now, Thomas, lookee here. Ain't it the grandest thing?

ECKERT: Just a peek, Lizzie, that's all I said.

LIZZIE: And that's all I'm taking. A peek don't mean a glance, after all?

ECKERT: Lizzie.

LIZZIE: Shut the door if you don't want to get into trouble. Imagine, little old me in the Blue Room of the White House. My Daddy would have never believed it.

ECKERT: Oh Lizzie, you're impossible.

LIZZIE: I think you like it. The danger, the excitement, just thinking that any moment now the President could walk in on us. Whatever would he say?

ECKERT: I haven't got long, you know.

LIZZIE: I bet he wouldn't say that.

ECKERT: No, I mean

LIZZIE: All right, Thomas Eckert, you win. Just so long as you take me out tonight.

ECKERT: Oh, I can't, not tonight. Mister Stanton, he'd have my guts for

LIZZIE: Shh, don't be silly, sugar. Why shouldn't you have some time off? Who'll be any the wiser?

ECKERT: Lizzie, no.

LIZZIE: Say you go down with something. You could write a note.

ECKERT: I'm not a well man, it's true.

LIZZIE: Poor baby. Come, dear Lizzie. She's got just the medicine you need.

(Kissing. Door opens.)

CLARA: Oh! Major Eckert!

ECKERT: Miss Harris! I

CLARA: Oh, I can scare believe my eyes.

LIZZIE: Relax, sister. Me and the Major just fancied a little sit down, that's all.

CLARA: Major Eckert? Who is this creature?

ECKERT: I can explain, Miss Harris. Really, I can.

CLARA: Oh, you'll explain all right, to the President of the United States. To Abraham Lincoln himself!

FORD: Of course, Mister Wilde is going to be appearing himself, seeing as he's a fine actor in his own right. Is it true his Prospero was praised by your own Queen Victoria?

DOCTOR: I dare say that's what he told you, yes.

FORD: And his Bottom, a marvel to behold apparently.

DOCTOR: Predictable.

FORD: I've never seen him work, of course, but you can't argue with the notices. Oh, we turn left here.

EVELYN: (sotto) I don't suppose it could be the real Oscar Wilde, could it, Doctor? You're not going to tell me he was a time traveller too.

DOCTOR: It wasn't in the programme notes when I saw the opening night of Ernest, thirty years from now.

EVELYN: Hmm, thought not. Besides, what would he travel around in? A handbag?

DOCTOR: No, no, no. Abraham Lincoln is assassinated here, tonight, at Ford's Theatre. There's more to this, and I mean to find out what it is. Come on.

EVELYN: Is it much further, Mister Ford?

FORD: Regular rabbit warren, ain't it? Lost a bear dancing act down here once. Pops, he reckons they're still here. Says that every now and again he hears this weird and unearthly growl.

DOCTOR: Oh, fascinating.

FORD: Oh, just this way. Say, if you're a real doctor, could you take a look at my neck? It hurts every time I do this.

DOCTOR: Well, don't do that, then.

EVELYN: He's not strictly a medical man, Mister Ford.

FORD: Oh, right. Some kind of affectation for the stage? I've heard about your English music hall, of course, but quite frankly, fat women singing songs about almost getting married won't cut the mustard with an American audience. We like our entertainment a little more sophisticated, if you know what I mean. Ah, here we are. (knocks) Mister Wilde? Mister Wilde? I guess he's resting.

DOCTOR: I don't care if he never works again.

FORD: Hey!

(Opens door.)

DOCTOR: Wilde? Wilde! Oh.

EVELYN: Empty. Oh, what a pong!

DOCTOR: The air does seem a little heavy.
FORD: We must have missed him.
DOCTOR: Interesting cabinet. Warm.
FORD: Kinda like your blue box.
DOCTOR: Kinda. A magician's vanishing box. Reminds me of Chung Ling Soo's.
EVELYN: Chung Ling who's?
DOCTOR: A marvellous Chinese conjurer. Did the old bullet catching trick. Saw him do it for the last time, in fact.
EVELYN: Don't tell me, the bullet caught him.
DOCTOR: The Wood Green Empire, 1918.
FORD: 1918?
DOCTOR: We have to find this Wilde, and quickly. Where is he, Mister Ford?
FORD: I don't have to be telling you nothing.
DOCTOR: It's important, man! Where else would he be?
FORD: Last I knew, old Johnny Booth was coming down to read for him.
EVELYN: John Wilkes Booth?
FORD: How many Johnny Booths do you know in this city?
DOCTOR: This is bad. This is very, very bad.
FORD: Look, I don't know who you think
EVELYN: I think it's time we told him who we really are.
DOCTOR: Evelyn, don't make it any worse.
EVELYN: Mister Ford, we never sleep.
FORD: (gasp) Pinkerton! You're with the Pinkertons. Well, why didn't you say? Of course, you couldn't. Two real life Pinkerton men, here in my theatre. So, how can I assist?
DOCTOR: We need to find Wilde.
FORD: He might be reading with Booth, on stage I guess. There's more than one way up.
DOCTOR: Evelyn, wait here with Ford. Don't let him out of your sight.
EVELYN: What are you going to do?
DOCTOR: Explain later.
FORD: So, what's this all about? Is Wilde in trouble?
EVELYN: He will be, when the Doctor finds him.
FORD: Hey, he left a couple of glasses behind. I don't mind telling you, I can do with a drink.
EVELYN: Be my guest, Mister Ford.

CLARA: Major Eckert, this is the White House. You have a position of trust here. How dare you abuse it?

ECKERT: Miss Harris, please.

LIZZIE: Oh, where's the harm? He was just showing me around. Loosen your corset, will ya?

CLARA: Major Eckert, would you please remove your friend.

LIZZIE: I got as much right to be here as you do.

CLARA: Oh, I, my dear, am the daughter of a Senator. You clearly are the daughter of the gutter.

ECKERT: Lizzie, wait outside.

LIZZIE: I was already going. Good day, ma'am. Oh, and Thomas, you won't forget your promise, will ya?

(Door closes.)

CLARA: Thomas, what in God's name were you thinking?

ECKERT: Miss Harris, Clara, please. This was a moment of madness.

CLARA: There's madness everywhere today. This rally this morning, it turned nasty. I swear I even heard voices calling for the President's blood.

ECKERT: The President is safe, surrounded by good men and true, believe me.

CLARA: I wish I could. But when you can't even trust the police

ECKERT: The police?

CLARA: Fellow named Parker in the crowd, not bothering himself unduly. And then I returned to find you, Thomas, cavorting with some jade, oh, in Blue Room.

ECKERT: Perhaps I'd better escort her out. You won't, you won't tell Stanton, will you?

CLARA: I don't know. Trust is a fickle thing, Major Eckert. Once lost, it takes a lot to get it back.

ECKERT: I understand.

BOOTH: Well? My name is Ernest in town and Jack in the country, and the cigarette case was given to me in the country.

KNOX: Perhaps a fraction less guttersnipe, Mister Booth.
BOOTH: (Dick Van Dyke-esque) More like this?
KNOX: Let's plough on. Top of the next page.
BOOTH: My dear Algie.
KNOX: That's it.
BOOTH: My dear Algie, I don't know whether you'll be able to understand my real motives. You're hardly serious enough. When one is placed in the position of guardian
DOCTOR: One has to adopt a very high moral tone on all subjects.
KNOX: Oh no. Doctor.
DOCTOR: Doctor Robert Knox, formerly of Edinburgh.
BOOTH: What's he talking about, Wilde?
KNOX: Take five, dear boy.
BOOTH: Five what?
KNOX: Minutes. We have a critic in the house.
BOOTH: Sir. (leaves)
KNOX: Now Doctor, I do hope you'll not be adopting a high moral tone.
DOCTOR: Oh zip it, Knox, or Wilde, or whatever you're currently calling yourself.
KNOX: Knox will do. I grew rather attached to the name, as a matter of fact.
DOCTOR: So they haven't caught up with you yet.
KNOX: That's the beauty of owning a Tardis, isn't it? You can always stay one step ahead, or behind. Oh, I er put in the odd appearance now and then, just to show my face, drop off a couple of articles for the newspaper. Perhaps something larger for my publisher. You know my books on fishing are proving extremely popular. Of course, in this day and age, the play's the thing.
DOCTOR: Business is good, then.
KNOX: Oh, flourishing. There's fantastic money to be made out of the legitimate theatre, particularly when the whole of Earth's future is mine to plunder. Wilde, Beckett, Orton, Pinter. I can pour myself a bowlful of greatness at the merest flick of a switch.
DOCTOR: Is that what you've become, a temporal plagiarist?
KNOX: Literary criticism is not your forte, my dear fellow. Don't try it.
BOOTH: Get on with it, Wilde. I haven't got all day.
DOCTOR: Why, what else have you got planned, Mister Booth? Busy day ahead?
BOOTH: I don't care for your tone, sir.
KNOX: Careful, Doctor. Mister Booth is a man of passion.
DOCTOR: Isn't he just.
BOOTH: Well, sir? Out with it?
DOCTOR: As you were. I'm watching you, Knox. Perhaps you'd allow me to watch you rehearse? I'm a great fan of Mister Wilde's work.
BOOTH: Very well, but don't interrupt. From when one is placed?
KNOX: Why not?
BOOTH: When one is placed in the position of guardian, one has to adopt a very high moral tone on all subjects. It's ones (struggling to speak) duty to
DOCTOR: What's the matter with him? Knox?
KNOX: I haven't a clue.
EVELYN: Stop! Stop!
KNOX: Ah, Doctor Smythe. Such an expected pleasure.
EVELYN: You!
FORD: I'm sorry, Mister Wilde. I couldn't stop her.
EVELYN: There's poison, Doctor.
DOCTOR: Poison?
EVELYN: In the elderberry cordial, in Knox's dressing room. I mean, I can't be sure, but I'm always suspicious of elderberries which smell of almonds.
BOOTH: P-p-poison? Wilde, you (coughs, thud)
FORD: Booth? Mister Booth!
EVELYN: Oh no.
DOCTOR: Changing history again, are we, Knox?
FORD: Booth, come on. Booth!
KNOX: Too late, I fear, Mister Ford.
FORD: This man is dead!
KNOX: Now please don't agitate yourself. He was a dreadful actor in any case.
FORD: Dead, in Ford's Theatre!

EVELYN: Doctor, if Booth's dead, who's going to kill the President?

DOCTOR: Who indeed.

[Part Two]

DOCTOR: This is murder.

EVELYN: And this article is responsible.

KNOX: Not so.

EVELYN: But the poison.

KNOX: Who's to say it wasn't meant for me? What if old man Grover got wind of my arrival? He's a formidably jealous theatrical rival.

DOCTOR: You really expect us to believe that?

KNOX: I've nothing to hide. Mister Ford? Call the police.

FORD: The police? Are you mad? General Grant is coming tonight.

EVELYN: And the President.

FORD: Dammit, Wilde, we can't afford to get wrapped up in scandal.

DOCTOR: Mister Ford, a man is dead. Presidential visit or no, something must be done.

FORD: I'll tell the police. I will. Tomorrow. In the meantime (effort) you gotta help me move the body. Oh, come on, Wilde. You wouldn't want to see me ruined?

KNOX: Of course I wouldn't, but it's my back. An old war wound.

DOCTOR: Oh yeah, Waterloo, was it?

KNOX: The Charge of the Light Brigade. My bayonet snagged in my new cardigan. I fell off my horse.

FORD: Pops! Pops, you gotta help me! Pops!

DOCTOR: This has to stop, Knox.

KNOX: What? I've done nothing.

EVELYN: You call murder nothing?

DOCTOR: With Booth dead, Time's equilibrium is irretrievably upset.

KNOX: I know. Lincoln will live.

EVELYN: And what do you get out of that?

KNOX: Well, Lincoln is rather good value, you know. Have you met him yet? Lovely chap. So articulate, for an American. Once his term is over, I've got great plans. Lecture tours all over Europe and the East.

EVELYN: With you on ten percent.

KNOX: The Gettysburg Address, oh, that's a cracker. Goes down a storm. Of course, he'll need some new material.

DOCTOR: Oh, Lincoln's we shall fight them on the beaches?

EVELYN: Lincoln's ich bin ein Berliner?

DOCTOR: Lincoln's lonely heart's club band?

KNOX: I say, that's rather good.

DOCTOR: Booth may be dead, but that doesn't mean Lincoln is safe. Time abhors this sort of thing. I promise you, Knox, right now Time is working silently to repair the damage you've done.

FORD: Dammit, Pops!

KNOX: Let's just see, shall we? No joy, Mister Ford? Come on, let's try backstage. Two minds are better than one. (leaves)

EVELYN: Doctor.

DOCTOR: What?

EVELYN: Lincoln didn't deserve to die, I know, not like that. But if he lives then the consequences for American civil rights will be catastrophic.

DOCTOR: I told you Time won't tolerate this sort of thing. Do you really think that right now only one man in America hates Lincoln enough to want to kill him?

EVELYN: So Booth's death could inspire another assassin. Perhaps Ford is right to keep this from the police. The fewer witnesses there are, the less history will be disrupted.

DOCTOR: Evelyn, once we start covering up dead bodies, we may as well go into partnership with Knox. No, my mind's made up.

EVELYN: And?

DOCTOR: We call Knox's bluff. We find a policeman.

EVELYN: Well, you're the Time Lord.

DOCTOR: Yes. And don't I sometimes wish I wasn't.

LIZZIE: There I was, in the Blue Room. Can you believe it, Johnny? And in storms this stuck-up piece.

Disrespecting me, she was.

PARKER: And you such a fine lady, Lizzie. (drinks) That physic hit the spot. I feel better already.

LIZZIE: A police officer needs that much medicine, he shouldn't be on duty.

PARKER: Quit it, girl. How's it stand with you and the Major? Everything set for tonight?

LIZZIE: Of course. I promised you, didn't I?

PARKER: Who was this woman?

LIZZIE: Clara Harris.

PARKER: Her, yeah. She didn't hear nothing, you're sure of that?

LIZZIE: Sure I'm sure. Thomas and me, were just, you know, planning our evening.

PARKER: Spare me the details. Give me another quart. I'm dry.

LIZZIE: I'm out of money.

PARKER: You'll just have to earn some, won't you?

LIZZIE: Johnny

PARKER: Don't you worry, girl. There'll be plenty coming from the Major when we've fronted him up.

Desertion, degeneracy, he'll be bleeding dollar bills for years.

EVELYN: Help! Is there a policeman in here?

PARKER: Aw hell.

EVELYN: Officer? Officer, you have to come with me. There's been a murder at Ford's Theatre.

ECKERT: And therefore it is with great regret that I must hand over this responsibility to a man of strength. I remain your obedient servant, Thomas Eckert. Bah. Not even convincing myself. Lizzie, the things I do for you. (writing) I fear, sir, my malady has returned with such a vengeance that it could affect my reliability in this most honourable of duties.

DOCTOR: Murder! I said, murder! At Ford's Theatre! Oh, is no one interested in history?

EVELYN: They think you're promoting something, Doctor.

DOCTOR: Promoting?

EVELYN: Julius Caesar, perhaps?

DOCTOR: Oh, do I look like some street corner huckster?

PARKER: Well, now you come to mention it, sir.

EVELYN: Doctor, this is Officer Parker, come to our aid.

DOCTOR: The way he's swaying, Evelyn, isn't *he* the one in need of assistance?

EVELYN: He's all I could find.

PARKER: What's all this about a murder? Cos if this is some kind of stage door hustle, I can book you in for a week-long engagement in the cells.

DOCTOR: No need for that, officer. Someone's died here, on stage.

PARKER: Wouldn't be the first time at Ford's.

EVELYN: An actor, John Wilkes Booth.

PARKER: Booth? Booth? (laughs) Oh, that's a good one. He's put you up to this, right? Joking Johnny.

DOCTOR: You know him?

PARKER: Course I do. What's the scoundrel up to now?

EVELYN: Not much. Just sort of staring.

DOCTOR: Evelyn. I assure you, sir, there's no joke. Your friend Booth lies stone dead inside this theatre.

PARKER: Show me.

FORD: Pops! Pops! Oh, where's that boy got to?

KNOX: Perhaps I poisoned him too, and sequestered the body.

FORD: That Doctor must be plumb crazy, Mister Wilde. I mean, murderer? You? Anyone can see a gentleman so refined and delicate as you has no taste for killing.

KNOX: Well, quite. I must say, the sight of that poor, dead, beautiful boy, with his eyeballs rolled back and his tongue lolling out. Oh.

FORD: Whoa there. I got you.

KNOX: Thank you, dear sir. I'll be all right. Just my condition.

FORD: Condition?

KNOX: Touch of the vapours. The old oobie-zootiks, you understand?

FORD: Oh, what am I thinking? Wilde, you need rest. Your dressing room, it's just along here.

KNOX: Oh, is it?

(Distant shout.)

FORD: What in Heaven's name?

KNOX: Oh. It came from the stage. You'd best hurry, Mister Ford. I'll catch you up.

FORD: No, no, you just wait here, Mister Wilde. I'll be back in two shakes.

KNOX: You do that, Mister Ford. You do that. (sotto) Truly some mothers do have 'em.

PARKER: No, no, no!

EVELYN: Officer Parker, I realise you're distressed.

PARKER: Distressed ain't the half of it, lady. Why, I only saw Johnny Booth this very morning. Now I ain't never gonna get back the money he owed me.

EVELYN: Oh. And there was me thinking Booth was your friend.

PARKER: Sure he was a friend. A friend I underwrote for fifty dollars in a hand of poker just last night. Who's gonna settle Johnny Booth's debts? The Devil, that's who.

DOCTOR: This is all very edifying, Parker, but the means by which he met his end

EVELYN: The suddenness, the rictus expression

DOCTOR: All of it points to one conclusion. Murder most foul.

FORD: Now, now, that's a foolish assumption to be making, and you know it, Doctor.

PARKER: Ford.

FORD: Parker. I'm sorry for your being dragged away from your duties for this unfortunate accident.

EVELYN: Accident? Mister Ford, a man in the prime of his life is hardly likely to drop dead rehearsing a play.

FORD: Well, the way I hear it, Booth's been burning the candle at both ends for years. It wouldn't surprise me if his heart gave out.

DOCTOR: What about the evidence, Ford?

EVELYN: Poison in the elderberry cordial?

PARKER: Damn it, Ford, cover Booth's face, will ya? I swear he's giving me the evils in death as in life.

FORD: Oh, I can do better than that. Mind your footing, folks.

EVELYN: What's he doing now?

DOCTOR: Evelyn, back!

FORD: Trap door!

(Thud.)

DOCTOR: Oh.

EVELYN: Oh.

FORD: There. Nice and quite down there. He won't be disturbed. Well, except for the rats.

DOCTOR: Ford!

PARKER: Now then, what's all this about the elderberry cordial?

EVELYN: It was poisoned.

FORD: She says.

PARKER: And she is?

EVELYN: She is Doctor Evelyn Smythe.

PARKER: Evelyn Smythe.

FORD: Of Pinkertons.

PARKER: Pinkertons, huh?

EVELYN: Well, er, not exactly.

FORD: But you said

DOCTOR: What my associate meant is, we're in fact

EVELYN: Freelance.

PARKER: Freelance. So, bounty hunters, huh?

DOCTOR: Officer Parker, surely it'd be best if we showed you the cordial in question.

PARKER: The way I'm thinking, it'd be best if I showed you and your lady friend the nasty side of Tommy Truncheon.

EVELYN: Well, I've never heard it called that before.

PARKER: You were saying, the cordial.

EVELYN: The elderberry cordial in the dressing room.

PARKER: Booth's dressing room?

EVELYN: Doctor Knox's dressing room.

PARKER: Doctor who?

FORD: She means Wilde.

PARKER: Doctor Wilde?

DOCTOR: No, his name's Doctor Knox. He's just posing as Wilde.

EVELYN: Well, we don't know his real name. It's not Knox or Wilde.
DOCTOR: Evelyn.
EVELYN: Where is he, by the way?
PARKER: Who?
EVELYN: Knox. Wilde.
PARKER: Now you said
DOCTOR: Officer, please. You can catch up later. Ford.
FORD: Wha?
DOCTOR + EVELYN: Where's Wilde?
FORD: I left him in his dressing room.
EVELYN: With the evidence.
DOCTOR: More to the point, with his Tardis.
PARKER: Tardis?
EVELYN: His Chinese cabinet. You don't think?
DOCTOR: Oh yes, I do. Come on!
PARKER: Well now, reckon I'm two arrests away from being all done here. Let's get after them.
FORD: Er, Officer Parker? It can wait, can't it? Until the morning?
PARKER: Well, that depends.
FORD: Excellent. Well then, let's discuss it in my office.
PARKER: Lead on, junior,

(Lift arrives, bell dings, door opens.)

TARDIS: Elevator doors closing.

KNOX: Scanner.

TARDIS: Scanner activating.

KNOX: Ah, Doctor. Try again, my dear fellow. Three, two, one, heave. Oh, bang on cue.

EVELYN [OC]: Where is he?

DOCTOR [OC]: Hidden away in his curious cabinet. Show yourself, Knox! Open up! (knocks) Open up, I say.

KNOX: Oh, if you insist. Doors.

TARDIS: Opening doors.

DOCTOR [OC]: Meddler, miscreant.

DOCTOR: Misanthrope. Murderer.

KNOX: Sticks and stones may break my bones, but alliterations will never hurt me. Now you're letting a draught in. Close.

TARDIS: Closing doors.

DOCTOR: Huh, voice control? You've got voice control?

KNOX: I've traded up. All the mod cons. There's even an elevator.

DOCTOR: An elevator?!

EVELYN: You sound more like Lady Bracknell everyday. I'm confused. Why hasn't Knox, you know

KNOX: Done a bunk already? Oh, I'm sure the Doctor will have worked that out, what with his towering intellect and all.

EVELYN: Well, Doctor?

DOCTOR: His Tardis is broken.

KNOX: Operational status?

TARDIS: Tardis functions at optimum.

DOCTOR: Then he's staying around to guard against my interfering with his plans.

EVELYN: But surely with Booth dead, the damage is done.

DOCTOR: Well, his fatal arrogance compels him to remain behind and gloat.

KNOX: I don't know about you, Doctor Smythe, but I'm far from convinced. No, the reason I'm still here is actually, well, I think it would be better if I showed you.

DOCTOR: Oh no you don't. Hands off the console, Knox. I'm not having you lure us into some cross-dimensional trap. I wasn't born yesterday, you know.

KNOX: Really, Doctor. All this fuss. We're only headed a few blocks north and west. The fact is, at my time of life I need to save my legs. Don't you trust me?

DOCTOR: I'd sooner trust a fox to run a chicken coop.

KNOX: Then why not pilot the machine yourself? It's just a small spatial displacement to Lafayette Park.

DOCTOR: Why not pilot

EVELYN: Well, why not? Sounds reasonable.

KNOX: I understand your reticence, Doctor. This is, after all, a rather better Tardis than you're used to, and its functions must seem rather baffling. Perhaps if I
DOCTOR: I can manage perfectly. Give me manual control.
TARDIS: Manual control now in operation.
DOCTOR: Small spatial displacement, is it? Easy peasy lemon
TARDIS: Sluice engaged.
EVELYN: That can't be right.
DOCTOR: I, I thought it er, best to shed some ballast before take-off.
KNOX: Might I suggest open flange, crank lever, and press enter?
DOCTOR: This machine needs a service, Knox.
KNOX: Hmm, don't we all.
(Tardis dematerialises.)

FORD: Come in, come in, Officer. Take the weight off your feet. Cigar?
PARKER: Don't mind if I do. You need to be careful, Ford, leaving your office unlocked. The street scrotes are getting bolder, and I should know.
FORD: Quite.
PARKER: And your money box, here for the picking. Ain't you heard of crime prevention?
FORD: Yes, yes. The thing is, Parker, I can't afford for nothing to go wrong for me today, what with General Grant due here tonight, and the President.
PARKER: I appreciate your problem, Mister Ford, I do. Actors dropping dead, playwrights running wild, bounty hunters crawling around backstage. Why, if Mister and Mrs Lincoln got wind of it, chances are they'd head over to Grovers instead.
FORD: Precisely.
PARKER: But if what you're proposing is I turn a blind eye to what I've seen here this morning, I'm afraid I can't oblige.
FORD: You can't?
PARKER: I've got to account for my movements, you see, and if my Sergeant asks me what I was doing at Ford's this morning, I've got to give him an answer.
FORD: Sure. Sure, sure, you have. I understand.
PARKER: Terribly bold, those street scrotes are. (rustle of paper) In and out in a flash with a full night's takings.
FORD: Oh? Ah.
PARKER: Personally, I'd lynch 'em. Let 'em dangle as an example, like.
FORD: Officer Parker, it seems that, it seems as though all last night's takings have gone.
PARKER: Have they now?
FORD: In an instant.
PARKER: Ah, those rotten scrotes. You know, Mister Ford, fact is, when they've tried something once, they'll try it again.
FORD: Again?
PARKER: Wouldn't be surprised if I had to come back here tomorrow morning to find your box office thieved once more.
FORD: Oh.
PARKER: And if I should happen to find a dead actor lying here, well, I'd think those scrotes had been disturbed, wouldn't you?
FORD: I, I suppose I would.
PARKER: I'll be seeing you in the morning, then.
FORD: You will.
PARKER: Oh, and Ford?
FORD: What?
PARKER: Be sure you get another box of those cigars in.

(Tardis materialises. A horse is startled. Tardis door opens.)

EVELYN: A bush?
KNOX: Well, we are in a park. It's perfectly reasonable.
EVELYN: A less thorny one would have been reasonable.
DOCTOR: Speaking of your chameleon circuit, Knox, hmm? Chung Lin Soo's cabinet?
KNOX: Down to the last bullet hole. Here we are, Lafayette Park. The White House due south.
EVELYN: And a military encampment east.
KNOX: There's been a war, you know.

EVELYN: I know.

KNOX: But that needn't detain us. Now, onward, my friends.

EVELYN: We're not really going to humour this monster, are we, Doctor?

DOCTOR: I don't see we've any choice. Booth may be dead, but the effect of his absence won't hit history for another ten hours or so. Until then, Time is in flux.

EVELYN: So things can be changed back?

DOCTOR: Things can be rearranged, maybe, but first I need to know what Knox is really up to.

EVELYN: He's after Lincoln. He said so himself.

DOCTOR: Oh, Evelyn, you didn't really believe that, did you? No, Knox will have a bigger plot in mind.

EVELYN: Why Lincoln, I wonder? Why not Garfield, or McKinley, or Kennedy? He'd be the biggest draw of the lot.

KNOX: Do hurry up, you two.

DOCTOR: Come on, Doctor Smythe. Our nemesis is getting impatient.

KNOX: What's keeping her?

DOCTOR: We waiting for something, Knox?

KNOX: For someone, but she's late. I don't understand it. She's usually punctual as anything. Twelve o'clock on the dot. Ah, there she is.

EVELYN: She rides well. Who is she?

KNOX: An angel of mercy, Doctor Smythe. Miss Harris. Miss Harris!

CLARA: Whoa. Whoa, whoa, whoa there. (dismounts) Mister Wilde, a pleasure to see you again.

KNOX: Oscar, please. I feared our avian friends might be disappointed today.

CLARA: I was slightly detained, Mister Wilde. (sotto) Government business.

EVELYN: Miss Harris, I take it? Miss Clara Harris?

CLARA: Yes, ma'am. Do I know you?

DOCTOR: Evelyn? What is it?

KNOX: Miss Harris, allow me to introduce two of my fellow compatriots.

DOCTOR: A pleasure, Miss Harris.

CLARA: Theatricals, it is?

EVELYN: Doctors, actually. This one being Evelyn Smythe.

CLARA: Then I am delighted to make your acquaintances, Doctors. Oh, forgive me, Mister Wilde, I don't have long today. Would you mind helping me with these sacks?

KNOX: I would be honoured.

EVELYN: That war wound soon healed.

DOCTOR: Surely your horse doesn't need all this, Miss Harris?

CLARA: It's for the birds, sir. Thank you, Mister Wilde.

KNOX: Miss Harris is a great friend to the creatures of the park. Every day at twelve o'clock she hies away with scraps from last night's White House table. She's famous for it. Of course, the soldiers camped here love her too. As soon as she's gone, it's open season. There's many a wren and a grebe ends up in a hungry squaddie's pot, all thanks to Miss Harris.

DOCTOR: What's all this about, Knox?

KNOX: You see

CLARA: (returning) That's all, that's all there is.

KNOX: All done for today?

CLARA: Oh, alas, yes. I must away, Mister Wilde. A pity I cannot dally with you and your (sotto) theatrical friends.

KNOX: Tomorrow, then?

CLARA: Tomorrow, yes. Away, away.

(Canters off.)

KNOX: Isn't she the most charming creature?

EVELYN: Clara Harris, daughter to a Senator.

KNOX: Breeding will out.

EVELYN: And chief witness to the crime that's meant to unfold tonight.

DOCTOR: So *that's* it.

KNOX: She knows her stuff, Doctor. Late this afternoon General and Mrs Grant will cancel their engagement and take the night train to Burlington. Mister and Mrs Lincoln will invite Miss Harris and her fiancé Major Rathbone in their stead.

KNOX: That was when I first saw her, wrapped in a Morris shawl, in the box at Ford's. The Major to her right, Mrs Lincoln to her left. All of them leaning forward over the rail to hear Harry Hawk's patter.

HAWK: Don't know the manners of good society, eh? Well, I guess I know enough to turn you inside

out, old gal. You sockdologising old mantrap.

KNOX: That's when Booth made his entrance. No hogging the limelight for him. He was too good an actor for that. Hawk's laugh, the one he knew was coming, that was his cue. He stepped into the box from the rear, said very quietly

BOOTH: Mister President

KNOX: And fired! And I promise you, this is the truth. At the very moment his Derringer discharged I, oh, I'm ashamed to admit it.

DOCTOR + EVELYN: What?

KNOX: Well, as you know, a while back I caught something of a cold. All sorted out now, but in the very instant Booth's pistol cracked.

KNOX: (sneeze!) I do beg your pardon.

HAWK: Well now, when I think what I've thrown away in hard cash today, I'd have to call myself some awful hard names. Four hundred thousand dollars is a big pile for a man to light his cigar with.

KNOX: But something was happening off to Hawk's right. The Major reacted, but Booth was on him at once, with his Bowie knife. Oh, I've seen it up close. It's a terror. Miss Harris turned then, her lovely mouth open for what seemed like forever before the sound came out.

(Clara screams. Audience gasps.)

KNOX: And then there Booth was, vaulting the rail, stood for a moment in full view of all and crying out loud

BOOTH: Sic semper tyrannis!

KNOX: Or was it

BOOTH: The South shall be avenged!

KNOX: I was so caught up in it all, I can't seem to remember. He landed on stage and darted past Hawk, fled into the wings. Finally it was Miss Harris' moment.

CLARA: Stop that man! Will no one stop that man! He has shot the President!

KNOX: The comedy turned to tragedy. The greatest night of Miss Harris' life turned into the worst. Her becoming blue dress became reddened in the Major's arterial blood.

DOCTOR: Oh, that's enough, Knox.

EVELYN: It's not the worst of it, though. The Major recovers, physically at least, but the night's madness never leave him. Twenty years or so later he takes a gun and a knife, just like Booth. He shoots her, and stabs her to death.

DOCTOR: Evelyn.

EVELYN: It's awful, just awful.

KNOX: I know. Oh, what was Lincoln, just another here today and gone tomorrow politician, his usefulness behind him. But Clara? Oh, hardly anyone weeps for poor dead Clara.

EVELYN: Her life ended that night surely as Lincoln's.

DOCTOR: Knox, answer me something. Are you in love with Miss Harris?

(Gunfire.)

KNOX: Doctor, Miss Smythe, we should away to the theatre.

DOCTOR: Answer me.

KNOX: Come on, away. The trooper's bellies are rumbling and we seem to be in the firing line.

DOCTOR: Answer me!

(Knock on door.)

LIZZIE: Patience, sugar. Patience.

PARKER [OC]: Damn it, Lizzie, it's me.

LIZZIE: John Parker, just cos you've had a skin full doesn't mean you get to take liberties.

(Unlocks door.)

PARKER: I've not got liberties in mind. Not that kind, anyway.

LIZZIE: John, whatever's the matter?

PARKER: Shut the door, girl.

LIZZIE: I can't say I care for your tone.

PARKER: Shut the damn door!

LIZZIE: Whatever you say, sugar.

(Door closes.)

PARKER: Booth's dead.

LIZZIE: Johnny Booth?

PARKER: Of course Johnny Booth. Heart gave out, it looks like. I went to his room hoping to get back some of the money he owed me. Spent the lot of it, curse him. But it's what else I found. Maps and

letters, plans and schemes. Read here.

LIZZIE: (reads) For a long time I have devoted my energies to the accomplishment of a certain end. The moment has arrived, and posterity I am sure will justify me. Men who love their country better than gold and life.

PARKER: And there's more, much more. The evidence is irrefutable.

LIZZIE: What's it mean, John?

PARKER: Booth was plotting to murder the President.

LIZZIE: Oh my.

PARKER: Soon, maybe even tonight. Who'd have thought a preening ham actor had so much in him?

LIZZIE: But this is terrible.

PARKER: Terrible Lincoln should escape, oh yes. But I'll tell you what, Lizzie. Old Booth's gonna have his day after all. How's your Major Eckert?

LIZZIE: Thomas? He's fine, I guess.

PARKER: I need him here. Within the hour.

LIZZIE: The hour? I could send him a note.

PARKER: You do that. I've got a plan, Lizzie, but there's only three things stood in my way. The playwright Wilde and the two people he's associated with. A man and a woman, doctors they are, bounty hunters.

LIZZIE: What do you mean?

PARKER: They gotta die, now, this afternoon, and your Major Eckert's gonna be their assassin.

[Part Three]

EVELYN: Knox? In love? Oh, Doctor, I refuse to believe that creature is capable of feeling.

DOCTOR: Oh, he wouldn't be the first man to lose his head over a pretty girl, Evelyn. Miss Clara Harris amply fulfils that criteria.

EVELYN: Oh, does she?

DOCTOR: Perhaps he's having a mid-life crisis.

KNOX: Do come along, you two.

EVELYN: Mid-life? He must be older than Methuselah.

DOCTOR: He may not have grown a pony tail or bought himself a pair of leather trousers, but it's the time meddlers equivalent.

KNOX: I'm not waiting all day, you know.

EVELYN: I'm sorry, Doctor, but I don't buy this whole love-struck teenager routine. It stinks, much like Knox himself.

DOCTOR: Lavender and bergamot. Not a very happy marriage, I'll admit.

EVELYN: That's just the top note of his distinctive fragrance. I'm talking about underneath that.

Haven't you noticed? He absolutely sings.

DOCTOR: No need to get personal, Evelyn.

EVELYN: And his breath, oh phew. Like a Labrador with halitosis.

KNOX: I'll give you the count of ten.

DOCTOR: Well then, he won't get far with Clara Harris, will he.

EVELYN: Oh, poor thing. She doesn't have much luck. Her fiancé Major Rathbone

DOCTOR: Yeah, murders her. I know.

EVELYN: He's also her step-brother.

DOCTOR: Oh, Evelyn. Morals before Evensong?

EVELYN: I'm just saying.

DOCTOR: Look, if it's any consolation, I don't believe Knox's profession of love any more than you do. If all he wanted was to save Clara, he needn't have killed Booth. He need only ensure that Clara never receives an invitation from the Lincolns to join them at the theatre. He need only stop the White House messenger.

EVELYN: Well, why don't we do that, then?

DOCTOR: Evelyn, no!

EVELYN: Knox has changed history, so can we. Let's steal his idea and stop the messenger.

DOCTOR: Knox's idea would be to shoot the messenger. No, I'm not fiddling with the timeline further on the grounds that he started it.

EVELYN: Then you won't warn Clara about Knox's intentions?

DOCTOR: We don't know his intentions.

EVELYN: We don't? I'd have thought it was pretty obvious.

KNOX: One!

EVELYN: Major Rathbone very soon meets a premature demise
DOCTOR: Evelyn, we don't know that for certain
EVELYN: And while she's still in widow's weeds
KNOX: One!
EVELYN: There he'll be, all there there, and such a shame, and an old bird may be tough my dear but it can still be tasty.
DOCTOR: Evelyn, we have to deal with this one step at a time.
KNOX: Suit yourselves. You can walk. Doors!
DOCTOR: Oh no! Now see what's happened.
(A Tardis dematerialises.)
EVELYN: Don't look at me. It's not my fault.
DOCTOR: Of course it isn't. Nevertheless, had it not been for your gassing, we'd be inside the Tardis now.
EVELYN: My gassing? Right, that is it.
DOCTOR: Oh Evelyn, come back. I'm sorry. It was an unfortunate choice of word, that's all. Evelyn!
EVELYN: (slight distance) You could stop it, Doctor, save Clara from a lifetime's misery, but you won't.
DOCTOR: You don't understand. There's more at stake here than Clara Harris.
EVELYN: I'm going to clear my head. Alone.
DOCTOR: Evelyn. Evelyn, you won't do anything
EVELYN: Stupid? Stupid, were you about to say? Another choice word. No, Doctor, I won't do anything stupid.
DOCTOR: I'll see you back at Ford's, then?
EVELYN: I dare say you will.

TARDIS: Fast return engaged.
KNOX: You know what, Tardis? I rather think my work in 1865 is done. The Doctor's taking care of business now.
TARDIS: New input received. Thank you, Doctor Knox.
KNOX: My pleasure. Now, shall we sell snow to some Eskimos?
TARDIS: Course corrected.
KNOX: The Doctor's in for such a nice surprise, it's almost a shame I won't be around to see it.
(Laugh turns into a cough.)
KNOX: Damn. Where's that hankie? Blood. There's blood here. Blood!
TARDIS: Doctor Knox, I recommend your immediate transfer to sickbay.
KNOX: No. No. Engage elevator function.
(Ding! Door opens.)
KNOX: Floor gamma seven.
TARDIS: Elevator doors closing. Going down. Would you like some music, Doctor Knox?
KNOX: Oh, yes please. Anything. Anything. Oh, that's good. Very jolly.
(*Galop Infernal* from Offenbach's *Orpheus in the Underworld* aka the Can-Can. Knox sings along.)

(Knock on door.)
ECKERT: Lizzie. Lizzie!
(Door opens.)
LIZZIE: Thomas, you got here. You sure no one saw you?
ECKERT: I hope not. Lizzie, your note.
LIZZIE: You'd best come in.
ECKERT: Desperate I see you, it said. It'd better be, Lizzie. Bad enough to be swinging the lead in the first place, but swinging it for the sake of
(Pistol cocked.)
PARKER: Of what, Major Eckert?
ECKERT: Officer, I can explain.
PARKER: I bet you can. Close the door, Lizzie.
(Door closes.)
PARKER: And you, you just sit yourself down on the bed.
ECKERT: I've been under a mental strain, Officer. You have to understand it's a temporary lapse.
PARKER: Not if these billets-doux here are to be believed. (paper rustles) What have we got here? December 10, October 13. February 22. Big day, February 22. (reads) My darling Lizzie, to what wild shores did we row last night

ECKERT: Don't, don't.

PARKER: Fact is, I won't, but only cos I can't find a further section I could read aloud without bringing down God's wrath on my tongue. This, this ain't the sort of thing any decent man should be up to, let alone anyone of rank.

LIZZIE: He ain't so bad.

ECKERT: Lizzie, how could you? What were you thinking of? I'd have given you money if you'd needed it. I'd have

PARKER: Don't be blaming the girl, Eckert. I don't pay heed to gossip as a rule, but gossip involving the President's chief protector? That's different.

ECKERT: Please, Officer, can't we

PARKER: I ain't sure who you should be scared of most, Tommy. Your God, your wife, or Major Stanton.

ECKERT: I beg you

PARKER: You know what, Tommy? I reckon in spite of it all you're still a good soldier. Sure you strayed from the path, but don't we all from time to time. It's not my place to ruin a man's career, destroy his reputation, cast him into darkness.

ECKERT: Thank you, Officer. Thank you.

PARKER: Don't be thanking me too soon. You're a soldier, Tommy, and as luck would have it a soldier's just exactly what I need just now. A good, brave, fearless soldier.

ECKERT: I don't understand.

PARKER: Lizzie, fix me and the Major a drink.

LIZZIE: Sure.

PARKER: Lemme guess. Tommy here, he takes it with a twist. (laughs) But I ain't fooling now, Tommy. What I've got to tell you's in deadly earnest. Being a police officer, I get to hear when there's aliens in town.

ECKERT: Aliens?

LIZZIE: Here you go.

PARKER: English aliens. (drinks) Over the street, over at Ford's, there's three strangers hiding out. Didn't arrive by boat, didn't arrive by stage. Smuggled in. Pretending to be actors. You know what they really are, Tommy? Seditonists. Seditonists and counter-revolutionaries here in DC to destroy Lincoln's peace before it's hardly begun.

ECKERT: What?

LIZZIE: John, is it true?

PARKER: A strong united American nation, that's the last thing the English want. A nation torn apart by civil strife, forced to call for help across the water, obliged to give up its independence, oh yes, that's the plan of that witch Victoria.

ECKERT: But how?

PARKER: Think about it. They're at Ford's. Who else is going to be at Ford's tonight?

ECKERT: The President.

PARKER: I got no evidence, Major. None at all. Can't arrest them, can't detain them, can't search their rooms. I know, though. I know I need a soldier. A brave, fearless soldier with an alibi. One who's told his boss he's taken ill.

ECKERT: I, I see. And Lizzie?

PARKER: Never seen you with her, nor ever will. Those rumours must be wrong, and I'll be sure to tell my superiors so. Just to be on the safe side, however, I'll hold on to these letters for now.

ECKERT: A soldier. Yes.

PARKER: Good man.

TARDIS: Floor gamma seven.

KNOX: Thank you. Can the can-can, will you? It doesn't suit the ambience.

TARDIS: As you wish, Doctor Knox. Elevator doors closing.

KNOX: The cage is secure, the beast is contained, so why this decay? Answer me. Well, if that's how you want to play it, my little will-o-the-wisp, let's give you a little prod. A couple of thousand volts ought to do it.

(Sizzle, something roars in pain.)

KNOX: Right, tonight. Now, come on, tell me all about it.

INDO: The link. I cannot maintain the link.

KNOX: Speak up, will you? I don't have an ear trumpet to hand.

INDO: There is contamination. The link is broken.

KNOX: What are you talking about? There's no contamination here.

INDO: There is. In you, Knox.

KNOX: No, come back. What do you mean, in me?

CLARA: There you go, boy. Isn't that better? Could be in a cavalry charge with a hide so fine and a tack so trim.

EVELYN: Excuse me? Hello?

CLARA: Yes?

EVELYN: Oh, sorry. I was about to ask if this was the Harris residence.

CLARA: May I help you, ma'am?

EVELYN: I think it's more a case of may I help you. Lovely beast.

CLARA: He is.

EVELYN: I didn't know if you remembered me from earlier, in the park?

CLARA: With Mister Wilde. Yes. You're the actor.

EVELYN: Doctor. We'll let that pass. Listen, it was Mister Wilde I wanted to talk to you about.

CLARA: I really can't imagine why.

EVELYN: Have you known him long?

CLARA: Strange old man. I cast a smile his way sometimes, a minor act of charity to someone not so fortunate.

EVELYN: Well, no more smiles, please.

CLARA: Oh heavens, I should have realised. You're his wife.

EVELYN: I most certainly am not. Listen, Miss Harris. I came here to warn you about Mister Wilde.

CLARA: Indeed?

EVELYN: I'm sorry to say he has designs on you.

CLARA: So? Let him. You surely don't think his feelings can be reciprocated, do you?

EVELYN: You never know.

CLARA: As if I, a Senator's daughter, engaged to be married, might ever bestow my favours on some stinking itinerant.

EVELYN: Oh, you noticed it too. The smell.

CLARA: You theatricals, you are all the same. Degenerate, filthy-minded libertines. You, Wilde, Booth, the whole pack of you.

EVELYN: Booth? You know John Wilkes Booth?

CLARA: It has been my misfortune to meet that smirking Bacchus twice today. Early on this morning and again not half an hour since.

EVELYN: I think you must be mistaken.

CLARA: I think it is you who are mistaken, Doctor Smythe. Booth ran in front of me on Pennsylvania Avenue, though I'd all but trampled him he dared to tip his hat to me and wink.

EVELYN: Booth?

CLARA: Yes, Booth. Now, ma'am, if you've concluded your interrogation, perhaps I might get on.

EVELYN: Of course. Forgive me. You have to understand. Sometimes I'm a very stupid woman. Goodbye, Miss Harris.

CLARA: Goodbye.

(Walking away.)

EVELYN: Booth, alive? How on Earth?

MESSENGER: Ma'am! Ma'am. Excuse me, ma'am.

EVELYN: I'm so sorry. I was miles away. Can I help you?

MESSENGER: Is this the Harris residence?

EVELYN: It is.

MESSENGER: Only I've brung them a message. You'll never guess from who.

EVELYN: From whom. I expect it'll be from the White House, from the Office of President Lincoln himself.

MESSENGER: But, but that's, how did you?

EVELYN: What say you give it to me to pass on?

MESSENGER: What say I don't?

EVELYN: Yes, you're probably right. I shouldn't interfere. You'll find Miss Harris over in the stable block. If you take it yourself, I dare say she'll tip you a nickel.

MESSENGER: You think? Thanks, ma'am. Thank you. (runs off)

EVELYN: Such a shame. Such a terrible shame.

FORD: Come on, come on. Shift. Shift, damn you!

ECKERT: You in need of help up there, son?

FORD: Who?

ECKERT: Ford the younger, isn't it? Your brother's not around, I see.

FORD: Why, he's in Virginia. Won't be back till next week, Mister er?

ECKERT: Major. Major Thomas Eckert from the White House.

FORD: Oh, hell. Can I, can I help you, Major?

ECKERT: Looks like you're the one in need of assistance. Don't you have stage hands to do your lifting and carrying?

FORD: Oh, that's Pops, normally. But he's

ECKERT: It's all right. (effort) Whew, what you got in here, Ford, a dead body?

FORD: Just Pops. Props! Spears, helmets, that stuff. That's all.

ECKERT: Well, if we emptied it out.

FORD: No, no, no, no! You're right, this ain't a job for a gentleman. I gotta find that Pops and tan his lazy hide.

ECKERT: Have it your own way. Now, I've been dispatched to review the arrangements for Mister Lincoln's visit tonight.

FORD: Oh, and General Grant's too, of course.

ECKERT: The General's indisposed.

FORD: He is? Oh well, it's not like the tickets ain't sold already.

ECKERT: I'll be wanting a list of all those persons working here.

FORD: My pleasure, sir.

ECKERT: I've got a question or two in fact about three particular individuals.

FORD: You have?

ECKERT: English individuals.

FORD: (sotto) Damn.

ECKERT: Some fellow named Wilde, and two so-called Doctors.

FORD: Not come across them, no.

DOCTOR: Then let me refresh your memory, Mister Ford.

ECKERT: Ford.

FORD: Oh, those English individuals.

DOCTOR: Oh, nice uniform. Major, is it? Well, Major, we have major situation. There's an inveterate scoundrel by the name of Knox lurking somewhere backstage.

FORD: No, there isn't.

DOCTOR: Ford.

FORD: I mean it, there isn't. I was in his dressing room not five minutes ago, and he's gone. His Chinese cabinet and all.

DOCTOR: Gone? But he should have been back here an hour ago.

ECKERT: Perhaps your seditionist partner got himself a case of cold feet.

DOCTOR: Seditionist? Well, I suppose that's a fair enough description of Knox.

ECKERT: But I can still bag myself the rest of the gang.

(Gun cocked.)

ECKERT: Hands aloft, sir.

DOCTOR: Oh, this is preposterous.

ECKERT: Come on, or I'll shoot you where I stand.

DOCTOR: Well, here's another fine mess I've gotten myself into.

PARKER: Identify yourself or I'll blow your head off.

LIZZIE: John? John, it's me.

PARKER: Damn, Lizzie, I told you to knock three times.

LIZZIE: Sorry, John.

PARKER: Have you got it all?

LIZZIE: Horsehair and spirit gum, an opera cape and hat. Got some pretty funny looks, I don't mind telling you. What's it all for?

PARKER: With the horsehair and gum you're gonna make me a moustache just like Johnny Booth's.

LIZZIE: What'd you want a moustache for? Thought you shaved yours off cos it itched.

PARKER: Cos tonight at Ford's, Johnny Booth is gonna kill that slave-loving crook, Lincoln, just like his letters say.

LIZZIE: Booth? But he's dead, you said.

PARKER: And Officer John Parker, he's gonna emerge from the bowels of Ford's dragging the assassin's corpse. America's hero, the man who chased and killed bad Johnny Booth. Promoted, fêted, set up for life.

LIZZIE: You can't mean

PARKER: I can. I kill Lincoln disguised as Booth. Easy seeing as I'm stationed at the theatre tonight. Booth, he's lying there stiff, just waiting to be captured. His letters prove his guilt to one and all. And you and me, Lizzie, we'll be rich.

LIZZIE: John, you can't. The President!

PARKER: Imagine it, Lizzie. You and me on our plantation sipping whiskey, cotton pickers serenading us in the southern sun, singing Polly-wolly-doodle all day.

LIZZIE: What about Ford? He knows about Booth being dead. And those others, the English folk.

PARKER: Relax. Your Major Eckert is dealing with the Englishers, and Ford won't say nothing cos he don't want no scandal attached to his theatre. Moreover, Eckert won't say nothing cos he don't want his love messages ending up in Stanton's hands.

LIZZIE: And me?

PARKER: And you won't say nothing, Lizzie.

LIZZIE: (choking) John, please.

PARKER: Fix us another drink, sweetheart.

LIZZIE: Yes, John.

PARKER: It's perfect. Lincoln, he's dead. Booth, he gets to go the way he wanted. John Parker, he's rich.

(Glass breaks.)

PARKER: Damn. That was good whiskey. (thud)

LIZZIE: I'm sorry, darling. I'm sorry. I've gotta save the President. I've gotta save Tommy, and them actors too. Most of all, John Parker, I gotta save you from yourself.

(Elevator dings, doors open.)

TARDIS: Elevator doors closing. Awaiting your instructions, Doctor Knox.

KNOX: (weak) Who'd have thought the old man could have so much blood in him.

TARDIS: Doctor Knox?

KNOX: Yes? Yes, of course. Of course! Abandon flight plan. Set return path.

TARDIS: To 1865?

KNOX: Yes, to 1865. I have to go back. We have to go back.

DOCTOR: Ow! Do you mind?

ECKERT: That's it, Ford. Make sure the straps are nice and tight.

FORD: I'm sorry, sir. I ain't a professional stage hand, as you know.

DOCTOR: And I am not a professional stooge, Mister Ford. What is this contraption, anyway?

FORD: The human spinning wheel. Some knife act left it behind. Six gun Sadie and her Wild West troupe, if I recall.

DOCTOR: Fascinating.

FORD: Boy, that Sadie was fully loaded, if you get my meaning.

ECKERT: Just turn the wheel, will you?

DOCTOR: If you're trying to disorientate me, you'll have to try a little harder.

ECKERT: I gather the usual modus operandi is to hurl knives at the person strapped to the wheel, avoiding all the vital parts.

DOCTOR: I'm familiar with the concept.

ECKERT: But seeing as I have no such knives to hand, I'll have to use a Derringer pistol instead.

FORD: Major Eckert, are you sure about this?

ECKERT: Your seditionist allies, sir. Give me their names.

DOCTOR: You've got the wrong end of the wrong stick, Major.

ECKERT: Turn it faster, Ford.

DOCTOR: I've a stronger stomach than you think. Have you ever heard of Alton Towers?

FORD: You'll tell him, Doctor.

DOCTOR: There's nothing to tell, Ford.

ECKERT: I'll count to five. One.

DOCTOR: Listen to me. There are no dark forces working here.

ECKERT: Two.

DOCTOR: Well, there were, but they've been and gone now.

ECKERT: Three.

DOCTOR: There was a plot to kill your President, that's true.

ECKERT: Four.

DOCTOR: But Doctor Smythe and myself, we were not a part of it!

ECKERT: Five! Confess your part, sir.
DOCTOR: I can't!
ECKERT: Then you damn yourself!
(Gunshot.)

LIZZIE: (breathless) Gotta stop him. I just gotta.
EVELYN: Miss, Miss, watch out!
LIZZIE: What?
MAN: Whoa there! Whoa!
EVELYN: I've got you. I've got you.
MAN: You could have got yourself trampled, you
EVELYN: Leave her alone. Can't you see she's distressed?
LIZZIE: Thank you, ma'am. But I gotta, I gotta run.
EVELYN: Wait, haven't I seen you somewhere before?
LIZZIE: Doubt it. Let me go.
EVELYN: In that gin joint, with Parker. I didn't catch your name.
LIZZIE: Lizzie Williams. And you, you're one of them from the theatre.
EVELYN: That's right, Lizzie.
LIZZIE: Oh, but you got to run, Miss, out of DC. Run like the wind.
EVELYN: I'm hardly of an age for sprinting now.
LIZZIE: He's waiting for you at Ford's. For you and your friends.
EVELYN: Who is?
LIZZIE: Major Eckert. You gotta get away from here before he kills you and your friends, and, and
EVELYN: And?
LIZZIE: (sotto) The President.
EVELYN: (sotto) He's going to kill the President?
LIZZIE: No, no, Parker is! Just go. Go!
EVELYN: Not a chance, young lady. We've got to sort all this out right now.
LIZZIE: You're not going to Ford's?
EVELYN: I most certainly am. That's where he's gone. My friend, the Doctor.
LIZZIE: Miss. Miss! Come back, Miss!

ECKERT: Well, well. Most unlike me to miss. I must be slipping.
DOCTOR: Perhaps the sights are out.
ECKERT: We'll try again.
FORD: Major Eckert, this isn't right. How is it you're gonna find out whatever it is you want if he's dead?
ECKERT: Spin the wheel, Ford.
FORD: Damn it, no!
ECKERT: Spin it, or I'll use your buttons for target practice.
DOCTOR: You'd better do as he says, Mister Ford. Our friend Eckert seems beyond reason.
ECKERT-INDO: I shan't tell you again.
FORD: You, you said that without moving your lips.
ECKERT-INDO: Spin.
DOCTOR: Major Eckert, are you all right?
ECKERT: I, I have to stop the, the seditionists.
ECKERT-INDO: Kill. Kill. Kill.
EVELYN: Stop! Stop right there.
DOCTOR: Evelyn, be careful. The Major's not himself.
LIZZIE: Tommy? It's me, Lizzie. Listen to me, Tommy.
ECKERT-INDO: Two.
LIZZIE: You've gotta listen.
ECKERT-INDO: Two more to kill.
LIZZIE: Tommy, it's all right. Parker, he's out of it. You don't have to kill no one.
ECKERT-INDO: Kill. Kill!
LIZZIE: I brung you your letters back. I promise, no one will ever know.
INDO: No
ECKERT: One. No one will.
DOCTOR: I don't know who you are, Miss, but keep going. Evelyn, come up here and untie me. Slowly.

EVELYN: Coming, Doctor. Who tied you to this giant roulette wheel in the first place?
(Lizzie talking quietly in the background.)
DOCTOR: Our friend Ford.
EVELYN: Well, he can untie you. These straps are too much for my arthritis. Ford, help me.
FORD: Y-yes, ma'am.
LIZZIE: That's right, Tommy. You, you give Lizzie the gun.
DOCTOR: That's it, Lizzie. Calm and steady. The Major is on a hair-trigger. Whatever's affecting him, and I've a nasty suspicion I know what it is, the slightest unexpected disturbance could tip him right over the edge.
FORD: What's that noise?
EVELYN: Oh no, not him.
DOCTOR: Oh, not now, Knox. Help me off here, quick!
ECKERT: No, no, no, you
ECKERT-INDO: Will not distract me from my task.
LIZZIE: Tommy, please. Ah!
FORD: The Chinese cabinet. It's appearing out of thin air. Oh. (thud)
(Tardis door opens.)
KNOX: Doctor, please, you have to help me. I
ECKERT-INDO: You.
DOCTOR: Knox, get out of here before you get us all killed.
KNOX: It's too late for that, Doctor. I'm dead already.
DOCTOR: What are you talking about?
KNOX: Oh, Doctor, what did you think all that lavender and bergamot was hiding?
EVELYN: I told you he smelt rotten.
KNOX: As ever you were right, Miss Smythe. Literally so in this case. The flu virus I was infected with back in Edinburgh
DOCTOR: It's all right, all right, I've got you.
KNOX: I couldn't cure it. I was days, hours from death. I only had one course open to me. A deal with a creature who could keep me going after mortality's veil had finally fallen.
ECKERT-INDO: A creature like me.
EVELYN: Doctor, that blue glow around Eckert. I've seen it before.
DOCTOR: Oh yes, under Brighton Pier with Maxie Miller. A strange blue glow. The sign of an alien entity to whom death is not the end, but a means to extend its ambitions.
ECKERT-INDO: You know of us?
DOCTOR: I name you, creature. I name you
ECKERT-INDO: We are the Indo. All of you will die now, but you will just be the first.
DOCTOR: Excuse me? The first?
ECKERT-INDO: Millions will follow, all thanks to your President, Abraham Lincoln. So, who will we begin with?
EVELYN: Doctor, do something!
ECKERT-INDO: Old woman, you spoke first. We shall start with you.
DOCTOR: No!
(Gunshot!)

[Part Four]

(Eckert cries out.)
FORD: Ah. Well, that's him dealt with.
EVELYN: Mister Ford.
FORD: Sorry. I guess I should have said watch your feet before springing the trap door.
DOCTOR: I thought you'd fainted.
FORD: Me? Never, Doctor. Er, it was a tactical withdrawal.
LIZZIE: Hey, I hope you ain't hurt Tommy.
FORD: Let's see. Nope, he's still breathing. He looks to be well out of it, though.
DOCTOR: Unconscious or not, the entity will soon regain its control. Ideally we need some iron ore.
FORD: Or what?
EVELYN: O R E, Mister Ford. Base metal. When we met this creature before, its powers were earthed by base metal.
DOCTOR: We need something metal to contain it, bind it until the energy discharges.
LIZZIE: Handcuffs.

DOCTOR: Perfect! Ford, I don't suppose Six Gun Sadie left behind a pair of handcuffs as well as her human spinning wheel?

FORD: I can check.

LIZZIE: Don't worry. The Major, he'll have some in his pocket.

DOCTOR: Ford, you and Lizzie here go and secure the Major.

EVELYN: Hang on, he's not a policeman. What's he doing with handcuffs?

LIZZIE: (sotto) He borrowed them off me.

EVELYN: Oh.

FORD: This way, Miss.

DOCTOR: Right, now for you, Knox.

KNOX: I thought you'd forgotten about me.

DOCTOR: I was otherwise engaged in saving our skins. Now, perhaps you wouldn't mind what you meant by

EVELYN: Doctor, I've suddenly remembered something I meant to tell you.

DOCTOR: Well?

EVELYN: I went to see Clara Harris.

DOCTOR: Oh, Evelyn.

EVELYN: Don't worry, I've not done anything stupid. Anyway, the point is,

FORD: Hey, Doc!

DOCTOR: What is it? Have you handcuffed Eckert?

FORD: Soon will have, but it's not him I'm worried about. It's Booth.

DOCTOR: Booth? What're you talking about? What about him?

FORD: He's gone!

DOCTOR: Gone? Let me see.

FORD: There, that's where the body was, next to the Major here.

EVELYN: That's what I was trying to tell you, Doctor. Clara Harris said she'd seen him this afternoon, alive!

DOCTOR: Animated, perhaps, but not alive.

(Slow hand clap.)

DOCTOR: What?

KNOX: Of course. He's alive after all. That would explain everything.

EVELYN: It explains nothing.

DOCTOR: Knox, what are you up to? Elucidate.

KNOX: Let me tell you about Chung Lin Soo and his most incredible illusion.

EVELYN: Don't tell me, he survived the bullet?

DOCTOR: No, I think the illusion Knox is referring to is his very existence. His life was his greatest trick.

KNOX: Quite so, Doctor. He wasn't Chinese at all. He was American. Fooled everybody. He even used an interpreter when giving interviews. A master of misdirection. You see, the greatest illusionists take their secrets to the grave. (coughs)

DOCTOR: Tell me, Knox. Tell me everything. Tell me now.

FORD: I can scarce believe it. Booth was alive all along? Boy, what an actor.

LIZZIE: Well, he sure fooled John Parker. I don't like to think what'll happen when those two meet. My money's on Booth.

FORD: And my money's with Parker. That swine got all my takings, and for nothing.

LIZZIE: Got 'em. Now, Tommy dear, I'm just gonna slip these on your wrists.

ECKERT: (weak) Lizzie?

FORD: Careful, Miss.

LIZZIE: I'm here, Tommy. I'm here.

(Thumpety, thumpety.)

FORD: The heart beat! Quick, get his pistol. His pistol, before he murders us both. That's right. Now, keep him covered while I put the cuffs on.

ECKERT: Lizzie. Lizzie, it was terrible. This, this thing was in my head.

LIZZIE-INDO: We know. We seek out despair and hopelessness. We make our home in the down-trodden, the beaten, the lost. That was you, Thomas Eckert.

FORD: It, it's in her. Oh Lord, it's in her!

LIZZIE-INDO: Quiet. The only reason you live is because we do not wish to attract the time travellers above.

FORD: Time travellers?! (sotto) Oh, sorry. Did you say time travellers?

LIZZIE-INDO: Enough. Cuff yourselves tight.

KNOX: I, I don't have much time, Doctor.

DOCTOR: No. Steady your breathing, channel your energy. We can control this.

EVELYN: Doctor, if he's dead already, there's not much we can do, is there?

KNOX: You can do one thing, Miss Smythe. You can hear my confession. The creature that sustained me, I found it on Mercury, trapped in a crater of congealed iron magma. I promised it one of my magical history tours if only it'd keep me going. The Booth experience, the chance to get inside the head of one of planet Earth's most notorious assassins. Oh, it loved the sound of that.

DOCTOR: I'll bet it did. But how did you contain it?

KNOX: Bound it in iron fetters and shut it up inside my Tardis, a caged beast at my command.

EVELYN: If it was so well-contained, how did it escape?

DOCTOR: It didn't, Evelyn.

KNOX: Ah, the Doctor's right, my dear. It's still there now.

EVELYN: Well, if it wasn't your little pet that took over Eckert just now, what was it?

DOCTOR: Another entity.

EVELYN: Another one?

KNOX: How was I to know when I landed here that the Earth was peppered with its cousins and aunts and uncles?

DOCTOR: Clinging like barnacles to human tragedy, drawn here by their hunger for misery and pain.

EVELYN: But why now, and why here? Surely the assassination of Lincoln can't be so monumental that these entities can smell it from space? It's just the death of one man, after all.

DOCTOR: Ah, you're forgetting the bigger picture, Evelyn.

EVELYN: Ah, the American Civil War. Of course.

KNOX: When I landed, my entity reached out into the psychic ether, called out to its kin, and its call was answered.

LIZZIE-INDO: Answered by me.

DOCTOR: Oh no.

EVELYN: Miss Williams.

LIZZIE-INDO: The Booth experience. We wanted it, we hungered for it.

KNOX: Well, I couldn't be having it, not another of those Indo on my trail. Then I had an idea. If I contaminated Booth

DOCTOR: Let me guess. With an extract of iron.

EVELYN: In the elderberry cordial.

KNOX: That and cyanide. My plan was that when Booth died and the creature entered him, it'd be trapped there as surely as the one inside my Tardis.

LIZZIE-INDO: My cousins warned me through the ether, alerted me to his murderous plan. All I had to do was nudge Booth telepathically to make him switch drinks with Knox.

DOCTOR: The cyanide would have made no difference

EVELYN: But the iron in his bloodstream

KNOX: Severed my connection with my captive entity. (coughs)

EVELYN: I still have a question. Why all that business with Clara Harris?

DOCTOR: Misdirection, Evelyn. The art of the illusionist. You've been playing us all along, haven't you, Knox? Wasn't a coincidence we landed here, was it? You got yourself into a pickle and you couldn't see your way out of it. You set me up!

KNOX: Now, now. You set yourself up. Brave Doctor saves universe from Time Meddler. Booth's death was a means to trap the Indo, that's all I was here for. I needed you on hand to make sure history didn't go too far adrift. Rather noble, I thought.

EVELYN: Noble my foot. You meant to leave us to put things right while you made good your escape.

KNOX: Fiendish, aren't I? But I fear events have run out of my control. Friend Booth, it seems, wasn't such a pushover.

LIZZIE-INDO: He feigned death to escape all our clutches.

KNOX: What an actor. This is it, the big crunch.

DOCTOR: No, wait. Don't go.

KNOX: Doctor, I bequeath to you my Tardis. She will answer to your voice. Her isomorphic controls will respond to your touch. You can even free my entity if the mood takes you.

LIZZIE-INDO: The entity will be released. It is not a matter of choice.

KNOX: There is always a choice. Use my Tardis well. Use it, Doctor. Use it.

DOCTOR: I will, Knox. And thank you.

KNOX: Quite all right, my dear fellow. Every star turn needs an understudy.

DOCTOR: Understudy?
EVELYN: Doctor?
DOCTOR: Understudy! The nerve of the man.
EVELYN: He's gone, Doctor.
(Crackling of burnt paper.)
EVELYN: I don't believe it. He's crumbling away.
DOCTOR: A dead man in evening dress, withered, wrinkled, and loathsome of visage.
EVELYN: Doctor, that's not a terribly flattering eulogy.
DOCTOR: The Picture of Dorian Grey. I thought he's appreciate the analogy.
LIZZIE-INDO: Enough. Our plan will continue.
DOCTOR: What plan? Knox is dead, Booth's out of your grasp.
LIZZIE-INDO: Booth is not our primary focus.
EVELYN: I don't like the sound of this.
LIZZIE-INDO: We shall take Clara Harris. She is miserable and cold. She will be with Lincoln when Booth fires his bullet.
DOCTOR: Oh no.
LIZZIE-INDO: She will place herself between the gun and Lincoln. She will sacrifice herself to save Lincoln's life.
DOCTOR: No, no, no.
LIZZIE-INDO: Clara Harris will become a martyr, a saintly innocent struck down by the secessionist cause. Lincoln will avenge her murder and the attempt on his life. He will seek terrible retribution from the untameable South. The Civil War will continue, more furious, more bloody than before. A beacon of suffering to attract yet more of our kind.
DOCTOR: I will not allow it.
LIZZIE-INDO: You cannot stop it.

BOOTH: Parker? Parker!
PARKER: Lizzie? Lizzie, you're being awful fierce.
BOOTH: Wake up, damn you, Parker!
PARKER: Oh, no.
BOOTH: Ah, yes.
PARKER: Hail Mary Mother of God.
BOOTH: The sign of the cross won't protect you from me.
PARKER: Please, God, no.
BOOTH: (laughs) Bad Johnny Booth back from the dead. How do you like that, John Parker?

DOCTOR: Let the girl go. Lizzie Williams, let her go.
LIZZIE-INDO: She's so afraid. We have almost smothered her spirit. When she kills you it will crush her completely.
DOCTOR: That's why I say, let her go. I don't want my death on her conscience. Enter me instead.
EVELYN: Doctor, you can't.
LIZZIE-INDO: You?
DOCTOR: You heard Knox. His Tardis will respond to me, and me alone.
EVELYN: You're not going to let the other one out?
DOCTOR: If this one accepts my terms.
LIZZIE-INDO: You presume to offer us terms?
DOCTOR: I'm a Time Lord. Try to kill me and I'll regenerate. And if I regenerate, Knox's Tardis won't know me from Adam, and your cousin will never be free.
LIZZIE-INDO: We are unsure.
DOCTOR: Of course, if a Time Lord were to willingly give up himself to you, why, all of history's horrors would be yours to visit.
EVELYN: (sotto) Doctor, you're playing with fire here.
DOCTOR: It's the only way, Evelyn. Think about it. The collected sufferings of countless billions on an infinity of planets, yours to be savoured at the flick of a switch.
LIZZIE-INDO: You would offer us all this? On what condition?
DOCTOR: You leave this planet alone. It's suffered enough. There's more than enough despair in the universe to go round, so we won't be making anything worse than it is already.
LIZZIE-INDO: We are tempted.
DOCTOR: Think it over. No pressure.
EVELYN: (sotto) Doctor, this is madness.

DOCTOR: (sotto) Don't you get it, Evelyn? Every star turn needs an understudy, hmm? Knox knew the only way to save the Earth was to lure the entity off this planet using his Tardis. That was his plan. And now I have to carry it out. I've no choice.

EVELYN: (sotto) There's always choice.

LIZZIE-INDO: We accept. Let us in.

DOCTOR: Excellent. Shall we go?

EVELYN: Wait, Doctor. If this is how it has to be, I'm coming with you.

DOCTOR: You are not, Evelyn. I need you here in 1865. You, and only you, know what's supposed to happen this evening. You have to set history back on its correct course. The future of humanity is in your hands.

LIZZIE-INDO: We are impatient. Submit to us, Doctor.

DOCTOR: All right, all right. Give me a chance.

EVELYN: Doctor, don't let this be goodbye.

DOCTOR-INDO: It is too late for goodbyes, Doctor Smythe.

LIZZIE: Tommy. Is that you, Tommy?

EVELYN: Doctor.

DOCTOR-INDO: Tardis, I command you to open.

(Tardis door unlocks.)

DOCTOR-INDO: All of history's horrors there for the picking.

LIZZIE: Miss, what's happened to Tommy? Miss?

EVELYN: I've got you.

(Tardis door closes.)

EVELYN: Doctor, wait. I can't let you do this.

(Tardis dematerialises.)

EVELYN: Doctor!

PARKER: Get back, Booth, or so help me God I'll

BOOTH: Shoot me? You're shaking so bad, Parker, you couldn't hit me from six inches.

PARKER: You're dead!

BOOTH: I'm an actor. Now put down your piece and let's talk business.

PARKER: Business?

BOOTH: A little bird tells me you were in and out of my room earlier today.

PARKER: I was?

BOOTH: Don't pretend now. I'm the actor. When I got back to my room, it was like a tornado had struck. All my correspondence scattered, my furniture upturned.

PARKER: I can explain, John.

BOOTH: No need, no need. It's pretty plain what happened. You thought I'd had it so you wanted to take what you could before the law sequestered it.

PARKER: I didn't take no money, Johnny, I promise.

BOOTH: I know. But I hope you'll take it now. Catch.

PARKER: What's this?

BOOTH: Fifty dollars, like you subbed me at poker. Don't let it be said Johnny Booth never settles his debts.

PARKER: Thanks, that's mighty

BOOTH: Anyhow, to business. Me and some friends, Payne, Atzerodt and Herold, have a fine old evening planned. A night at the theatre. But then you know that already, don't you, Officer Parker.

PARKER: Look, John, I

BOOTH: Don't interfere, Parker. Not if you know what's good for you. You just crawl back inside that bottle and forget you ever met me. I bid you goodnight.

PARKER: What's happened, Booth? You've changed.

BOOTH: What, since I died, you mean? Maybe I have changed. For the better, John. For the better. I guess I've seen the light.

INDO: This is our transport to the realms of infinite despair?

DOCTOR: It is. But first I need to calibrate the destination settings.

INDO: No! First you shall release our cousin from bondage.

DOCTOR: Let's get one thing straight, shall we? If we must share the same body for all eternity, we can at least do each other the simple courtesy of allowing the other to finish their sentence, hmm?

Capisce? Tardis, the other Indo entity. Where is it?

TARDIS: Entity located on floor Gamma Seven.

DOCTOR: That's a long way down. Tardis, summon the lift, if you will.
(Ding! Lift doors open.)
DOCTOR: That was quick. Come on, you. Floor Gamma Seven, please.
TARDIS: Elevator doors
DOCTOR: No, no, stop! Belay that order.
INDO: What is the matter?
DOCTOR: I've just realised. If I take you down there, the mass of iron required to bind your cousin will most likely pull you in too.
INDO: Is this true?
DOCTOR: Don't take my word for it. Tardis? Calculate the flux density of the electromagnetic field on floor Gamma Seven.
TARDIS: Flux density calculated at five point nine pico-teslas.
INDO: This is a lot.
DOCTOR: I'll say. Phew. Lucky I thought of it. Look, you'll just have to pop out of me for five minutes.
INDO: No.
DOCTOR: Well then, there's nothing I can do. Your cousin will have to remain caged up for eternity.
INDO: Very well.
DOCTOR: Tell you what. You stay here in the lift. The Tardis can whip up some localised resistance, I'm sure, to keep you safe. That way you can keep your eye on me, or whatever passes for your eye, while I'm freeing your trapped cousin. Deal?
INDO: We concur.
DOCTOR: Now, there you are. Ready? Good. Tardis, close the doors if you would.
TARDIS: Elevator doors
DOCTOR: Hang on, I left my (??) stick on the console. Back in a tick.
TARDIS: Closing.
(Doors close, the Indo bangs on them, the Doctor laughs.)
DOCTOR: And you can stay there. Tardis, don't ever, ever open those doors. Understood?
TARDIS: Understood.
DOCTOR: Trapped in a metal box for all eternity. Sometimes I amaze even myself. Now, destination settings. Hmm? Tardis, I can't seem to access the flight controls. What now?
KNOX [OC]: Ahem. Up here, on the scanner.
DOCTOR: Knox? Are you a recording?
KNOX [OC]: As you'll observe, Doctor, I'm a recording, live from beyond the grave as it were.
DOCTOR: Oh please.
KNOX [OC]: You will observe that the flight controls have ceased to function. My Tardis was instructed to revert to automatic mode five minutes after dematerialisation. I trust that's given you enough time to trap the spare entity in the elevator.
DOCTOR: Lift. And smugness does not become you, Knox, especially in death.
KNOX [OC]: Good old Doctor, I knew I could rely on you to sort it all out. Noble of you to sacrifice yourself for the greater good.
DOCTOR: Oh, get on with it.
KNOX [OC]: Well, the fact is, you're bound for that iron crater on Mercury. You, the entities, Tardis and all. Shame about losing the Tardis, but you can't take it with you, as they say. It only remains for me to say ta-ta, it's been fun.
DOCTOR: Knox! Knox.
KNOX [OC]: Oh, just in case the three of you get a little glum, how about a bit of cheery music to lift the spirits. Tardis, cue the tape. (Galop Infernal) Before you ask, Doctor, no, you can't switch it off. Not ever. (sings along briefly)
DOCTOR: Tardis, let me tell you something. If I ever get out of here, it's no more Mr Nice Guy for me.

LIZZIE: Tommy, please, I've got to speak to you.
ECKERT: Get your hands off me, woman.
LIZZIE: Tommy, don't I mean nothing to you no more?
ECKERT: I've never seen you before in my life. Now leave me be before, before I have you arrested. Good night!
LIZZIE: Tommy? Tommy? I'll scream if you don't turn around. I will. (deep breath)
EVELYN: Oh no you won't, Miss Williams.
LIZZIE: (muffled) Hey. Hey, you can't do this to me.
EVELYN: Now calm down. If I let go of your mouth, will you tell me the trouble, nicely?
LIZZIE: (muffled) I promise.

EVELYN: Good. Well?

LIZZIE: It's Tommy, Major Eckert. I gave him his letters back. I figured if I did that, maybe he'd like me again.

EVELYN: But?

LIZZIE: He tore 'em up into a million little pieces, and then he said to leave him alone, seeing as I was nothing but a worthless jade.

EVELYN: Men. Huh. A delightful species.

LIZZIE: (crying) Oh, what am I going to do? Tommy, he don't want anything to do with me. And John Parker, I dread to think what he'll do when he finds me.

EVELYN: Lizzie, listen to me. You have to get out.

LIZZIE: Out?

EVELYN: Of Washington. You can start again, somewhere new, somewhere nobody knows you.

LIZZIE: I never dreamed of no plantation like John. Just a small plot of land, that'd be plenty.

EVELYN: I hear California's nice.

LIZZIE: Easy enough for you, Miss. You've got money, ain't you.

EVELYN: If only I did. The Doctor vamoosed without leaving behind so much as a brass farthing. If he doesn't come back, I'll be busking on street corners, collecting coins in a tin.

LIZZIE: A tin. Oh, I just remembered. I gotta go. Thank you, Miss. (kiss) I'm gonna do just like you said.

EVELYN: You are? How?

LIZZIE: John Parker, he left a money box in my room. I reckon he owes me, don't you?

EVELYN: Lizzie, I didn't mean theft. I meant. Lizzie? Oh, what's the use.

DOCTOR: Changing history, are we, Doctor Smythe?

EVELYN: Doctor! It's you! You made it.

DOCTOR: Evidently.

EVELYN: Oh, I could kiss you. In fact, I will. (kiss)

DOCTOR: Now, now. It's 1865, remember. They're not used to public displays of affection.

EVELYN: Oh, come on then, how'd you do it, clever clogs? How did you escape?

DOCTOR: Oh, the cleverness of me.

EVELYN: Oh, careful, Peter Pan. Pride comes before a fall.

DOCTOR: Actually, it was rather brilliant. Having trapped the entity in the lift

EVELYN: Oh, metal box, power drained, entity weakened. Go on.

DOCTOR: Yeah, well. Well, having done that, I had to contend with Knox's little gift from beyond the grave.

EVELYN: His what?

DOCTOR: As I suspected, Knox was planning a typically baroque surprise for me. Eternity in an iron crater on Mercury. But he didn't count on my resetting his Tardis's galactic positioning system to read Mercury old southern lava field as the corner of 8th Street, Washington, Earth, which is where it promptly defaulted to, two blocks from here.

EVELYN: That's quite clever, I suppose. Did it take you long?

DOCTOR: Blink of an eye, to a Time Lord.

EVELYN: I only ask because er there seems to be a touch of grey in your hair.

DOCTOR: What? Oh, a side-effect of the entity possessing me, I dare say. Anyway, from there it was a simple matter of setting his Tardis off into the Vortex, entities and all.

EVELYN: Was that wise?

DOCTOR: I removed the temporal shields and left the journey's end unspecified. We'll see how ageless and deathless the Indo really are.

EVELYN: Good. I hope Parker doesn't catch up with her.

DOCTOR: Sorry?

EVELYN: Lizzie Williams, I mean.

DOCTOR: Oh, like Booth and Ford and Clara Harris and Lincoln, she's history, alas. Come on, you. The seats are beginning to fill, and we should be elsewhere.

EVELYN: Doctor, as an historian, I can't help feeling I ought to witness the event at first hand. Primary sources and all that.

DOCTOR: Knox is in the audience, remember? If he sees us here, this whole business might start over again, only twice as complicated.

EVELYN: Hmm, that's me convinced. About turn, then.

FORD: Doctor, Miss Evelyn.

DOCTOR: Oh no. Mister Ford, how nice to see you again.

FORD: Ain't it fantastic? I gotta tell you, a theatre this packed gives me a nice warm feeling in my

wallet. Mister and Mrs Lincoln'll be here any minute.

EVELYN: With Miss Harris and Major Rathbone?

FORD: Yeah. Shame about the Grants. I just wanted to check. There ain't gonna be any more strange and inexplicable occurrences today, are there?

EVELYN: Well, Doctor?

DOCTOR: Nothing we don't already know about.

FORD: Well, that's a relief. I just worry that what with all the comings and goings that there might be a loose end left dangling.

DOCTOR: Not to my knowledge, Mister Ford.

FORD: A loose end. Oh, my saints!

DOCTOR: Ford?

FORD: I clean forgot. Pops!

EVELYN: Your stage hand? The one who was missing?

FORD: Oh, how could I forget? Poor dead Pops.

EVELYN: Dead?

FORD: In the props trunk.

DOCTOR: Show me.

FORD: I was tidying up this afternoon, that's why I went to the props trunk, and don't I wish I hadn't.

DOCTOR: This Pops was inside?

FORD: All boggle-eyed and stiff, a silk cravat around his throat.

EVELYN: What, like one of Wilde's?

FORD: Lor', now that you say it.

DOCTOR: Poor Pops must have seen more than Knox wanted him to. Now, is this the one?

FORD: That's it. You'll need the key.

DOCTOR: No need, it's not locked.

EVELYN: Well, Doctor? Is he?

DOCTOR: If he was here earlier, he's not here now.

FORD: What?

DOCTOR: See for yourself.

FORD: Now this I don't understand. I locked it tight, I swear.

DOCTOR: I don't doubt it, but the interesting thing is the lock's been broken from the inside.

EVELYN: Doctor, the entity. Oh, don't tell me it's escaped and is using this Pops's body.

DOCTOR: No, I assure you the entity has been comprehensively defeated.

FORD: Oh, what's it mean, then?

DOCTOR: Oh, every star turn needs an understudy.

EVELYN: Knox? But he's dust. Ashes and dust.

DOCTOR: Maybe. But in all that time Knox was connected to the Indo, who's to say he didn't absorb some of their powers?

EVELYN: You mean he put himself inside the body of Pops?

DOCTOR: The suggestion doesn't seem too fanciful.

FORD: You mean Pops is walking about, dead but not dead?

EVELYN: Doctor, we have to tell Major Eckert. We have to stop him.

DOCTOR: There's no point, Evelyn. No, I fear Knox will be long gone by now. As must we be.

FORD: Off time travelling, are we?

EVELYN: Time travelling? Whatever gave you the idea we were time travellers?

FORD: Lizzie did, when that thing got into her head. Tell me the truth, pure and simple. I can take it.

DOCTOR: The truth, as Oscar himself will say thirty years from now, is rarely pure and never simple.

Goodbye, Mister Ford. I hope the evening goes with a bang.

(Theme music)

TRAIN GUARD: Last call. Baltimore, Wilmington.

WOMAN: (English) Oh, forgive me. I didn't realise.

MAN: (English) Not at all, Madam. Entré.

(Slides compartment door shut.)

WOMAN: A fellow native. Are you headed home, sir?

MAN: New York first, and then home, yes.

WOMAN: This is a fascinating nation, but I shan't be sorry to return.

MAN: You are not a tourist then?

WOMAN: I'm a governess by trade, but my little devils turned out to be proper devils, and so back to England it is.

MAN: Ah. Experience is the name everyone gives to their mistakes.

WOMAN: That's most amusing. I take it you're a literary man?

MAN: I'll admit to some modest ambitions in that field, but I'm a doctor by profession.

WOMAN: Well then, I'm pleased to meet you, Doctor?

MAN: Doyle. Doctor Arthur Conan Doyle.

WOMAN: I must say, that's an interesting scent, Doctor Doyle. What is it?

MAN: Lavender and bergamot. It's my own concoction.